A Look At The Colored Physician

Excerpts from MEDICAL NEWS

Aug. 9, 1968

Six months ago, after 20 years of general practice in Detroit, Dr. Delford G. Williams Jr. was finally given staff privileges at Crittenton Hospital, a modest, 179-bed facility on the city's northwest side.

Dr. Williams had had privileges for years at three other Detroit hospitals, but they are predominantly colored institutions, and for the soft-spoken 47-year-old native of Wilmington, N.C., the white acceptance came about ten years too late.

Dr. Williams dropped his membership in the AMA in 1958, and he has no plans to go back. This week, the Detroit doctor was busy scheduling his trip to the annual meeting of the National Medical Association in Houston, as a delegate from the Detroit Medical Society.

He still belongs to the Wayne County and Michigan State societies. As a prosperous practitioner with offices in a professional building near the site of last year's bloody riots and a house in one of Detroit's elite colored districts, Dr. Williams has no economic worries. But the struggle for medical education, training, and acceptance by his white colleagues has left indelible scars, emotional slashes familiar to his 7,000 black medical colleagues, of whom 3,000 are members of the 93-percent black NMA, convening next week.

"I was a member of the AMA for ten years or more," Dr. Williams explains. "Then all of a sudden it dawned on me that the AMA was not doing one thing for the doctor or the colored patient. There were a lot of things going on about that time. I was trying to get on the staff of some of the hospitals and I went to Grace Hospital. They refused even to give me an application. It was also about that time that the Detroit Medical Society started a strong drive to integrate the hospitals.

Suddenly I realized that I was paying money to the AMA to fight me. The AMA could have stopped segregation in the hospitals years ago."

When the Wayne County Medical Society sent Dr. Williams his annual dues bill that year, he told them he didn't want to belong to the AMA any more and to deduct that amount from his bill.

The National Medical Association never would have sprung to life in 1895 had it not been for AMA policies, Dr. Williams contends. The AMA would not allow a physician to be a member unless he was a member of his county medical society. Throughout the South, black doctors couldn't get in.

The NMA is not an all-black society. Dr. Lionel F. Swan of Detroit, the association's president, points out that "the National Medical Association, in contradistinction to other national medical organizations, has never discriminated against or barred from membership any physician of any color or religion or racial origin."

Dr. Swan emphasizes that NMA enthusiastically supported Medicare at a time when the AMA bitterly opposed federally sponsored health plans. He also criticizes the stand taken by former AMA president Milford O. Rouse that the greatest obligation of physicians is protecting "the American way of life." Dr. Swan maintains that under his leadership, NMA will support the primacy of "the health of the people."

Dr. Williams, who thinks GP Swan is "really terrific," believes the NMA is going about solving the problems of colored physicians and patients "the right way," by applying pressure where needed, speaking out forcefully on issues, and developing new solutions to old problems.

The biggest medical problem facing the nation today, Dr. Williams says, is getting good, comprehensive medical care to people in need near the places they live, primarily the metropolitan inner cities. The best place to dispense it, he is convinced, is in the doctor's office or in a group practice unit associated with a full-fledged medical facility set up for everybody in the community not just the indigent.

"You'd be surprised what Medicare has done for many people," Dr. Williams says. "It has given them dignity and importance. With their own doctor to call on, they feel like somebody, not just a case number in a big city clinic. They get more frequent care, and they don't have to wait so long to receive it. They may have to wait a couple of hours here in my office some days, but that's a lot better than a full day sitting around at a poor people's clinic."

* * *

ON THE available openings for colored physicians and residents, the NMA's Dr. Swan says: "When my white friends around the country say 'conditions are much better now,' I usually point out two very significant things.

"Number one is that there was very, very little, if any, voluntary desegregation and, number two, the number of opportunities in residencies and internships that now exist for colored residents come from the tremendous shortage in host staff personnel."

Dr. Cain agrees. Even though the outside pressures have been considerable, he says, the more important reason opportunities are available in practically every area of medicine for black people now is that doctors, in general, are so scarce.

"When the number of white doctors started to be less than the demand, the house staffs were filled with people from all over the world who could not even converse in, shall we say, American before the doors were opened to colored Americans.

"First they trained all the foreigners, and when even that pool got too small, finally the colored American got in.

"Take a place like Henry Ford Hospital. Up until six years ago, Ford Hospital had never trained a colored intern — never!"

* * *

THERE ARE still many hard-core areas of hospital discrimination being reamed out by the NAACP, an organization the NMA backs both philosophically and financially. Hospitals that receive public funds may be deaf to persuasion but must be responsive to legal decisions.

Backed by the law, colored physicians are demanding and receiving the right to treat their patients in such hospitals.

A case in point is the recent U. S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that two colored physicians must be admitted to the medical staff of the Mobile (Ala.) General Hospital (MWN, July 19).

* * *

COLORED PHYSICIANS, Dr. Swan points out, though relatively small in number — 11.4 percent of the nation's population, but only 2.2 percent of the nation's physicians — have contributed much to integrated medical programs. They have served in the AMA Volunteer Physicians for Vietnam program, served in the Armed Forces Medical Corps, served aboard the S.S. Hope," and frequently are active on local civic boards and councils.

In medical talent recruitment and motivation, the NMA has a national program that reaches right down to medical career clubs set up in junior high and high schools by NMA-local medical societies.

According to a recent report released by the Association of American Medical Colleges, approximately 300 colored students are expected to enter U.S. medical schools this fall. This represents a 50 percent increase over the situation five years ago.

One of the major problems limiting the admission of colored students to premedical colleges and their ability to remain enrolled stems from the poor quality of their elementary and junior and senior high school education, Dr. Swan declares.

"Even those with As and Bs who graduate from predominantly colored are two to three years behind their white counterparts when they enter college," he says. "Their training has been inferior."

Further, as Dr. Swan told Vice President Humphrey at a meeting he had with him in Washington, "countless thousands of colored children at the junior high school level are automatically scheduled to matriculate in high school in curriculums that do not lead to college entrance. Hence they are lost to the profession."

An important policy change has taken place in the NMA in recent years, Dr. Swan reports.

"Though the NMA has not given up being a protest organization — it will fight its contribution to the last barrier — it has ceased to be only a protest organization," The NMA, he says, has now taken on a pioneering function, blazing new pathways for the delivery of comprehensive health care and seeking new solutions for old, persistent problems.

Disadvantaged get computer training

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Two nationally known firms have joined with the Greater Los Angeles Urban League to establish a training center providing data processing instruction for disadvantaged residents of Los Angeles.

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Hayes calls for skillful leaders

ALBANY, Ga. — The quest for total equality of colored people demands that they produce leaders who are not only strong, but who will skillfully and wisely guide us through the traps of callousness and intellectual myopia which endanger all free men, regardless of race.

"If such leaders are not forthcoming and soon," the keynote speaker for the annual Faculty Conference at Albany State College said, "American colored people will not have won freedom at all, regardless of what the laws may say." They will have instead, Dr. Charles L. Hayes of the U.S. Office of Education said, "another kind of slavery — the slavery of the 20th Century man."

This well-known educator who was on the A and T State University staff (Greensboro, N.C.) for 17 years is a native of Baton Rouge, La., and currently chief of the developing institutions' branch of the Division of College Support.

Holy Trinity's rector to be invested Thursday

The Rev. Robert M. Powell, A.B.D.D., will be invested as the first rector of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Lafayette and Wheeler Aves.

The Rt. Rev. Harry Lee Doll, bishop of Maryland, will preside at the exercises set for Thursday, Oct. 3, 8 p.m., at the church.

The service will also celebrate Holy Trinity's recognition as an independent congregation of the Episcopal diocese of Maryland.

A reception will follow in the undercroft of the church.

Before the church became independent and established its own vestry, Father Powell held the title of vicar. Under his guidance, the church has grown from a handful of members to over 500.

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Keen Teen Scene Department sets tour of projects

By KAREN BANFIELD

Editor's Note: Karen Banfield is a senior at Forest Park High. She is active in school activities and is a member of the Sigma Omega Kappa Sorority. After high school, she plans to attend college and major in psychology.

On Monday, September 23, the Mayor's Youth Council began the school year with an encouraging start for Baltimore's youth. The council sponsored "Youth Night" in the City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Judging by the crowd of about 120 people, one could say the council, headed by Larry Young, had really organized and advertised this meeting.

This gathering showed that, contrary to the thinking of many adults, teenagers are not just concerned about dancing and the opposite sex.

The two main topics brought out at the meeting were education and recreation. Demands were made for a new Dunbar High and several desperately needed recreation centers.

* * *

MARSHALL MURRAY, senior class president of Forest Park High, urged all teens to unite and better Baltimore.

Said Mr. Murray, "I'm not exactly a jitterbug, but I hang around with some. I think we should get some jitterbugs and some other kids together to make Baltimore better for teenagers!"

That's Marshall's opinion. What's yours? To express your opinion come to the Youth Council's meetings every Saturday at 3:30 p.m. at City Hall in room 303. Everyone is welcome!

* * *

WELL, IT'S chilly outside, and you know what that means — football. Preparing for the upcoming season are Forest Park's vivacious cheerleaders.

Faithfully practicing every day since August 15, the girls are anxiously awaiting their first game this Friday.

The team's captain, yours truly, is enthusiastically supported by charming Gloria Campbell, co-captain, Everlon Samuels, Dona Hunt, Karyn Rouse, Alfreda McCoy, Avalon Jackson, Jeanne Murray Yolande Paxton, Stephanie Winchester and Janice Cheatham.

The girls were chosen from a group of 40 girls last May by members of the faculty. Since practice began, these hardworkers have practiced almost everyday chanting cheers, composing new ones and gulping down throat lozenges.

Says Karyn Rouse, "We've got a really hot football team, and so we need a really hot cheering squad to back them up."

But Foresters are not the only people waiting for football games. Those Morganites have some fans in the stands. Seen strolling around Morgan's campus were some new faces: Harvey Daniels, Melvin Henry, Clarence Hicks, Mary Hopkins, Stephanie Burnett, Joe Green, and many, many, many more.

With all the other high schools, junior colleges, schools in town some things that are really worth hearing about, must be happening.

If you know about something or you have some group that deserves recognition let me know! Write to: Keen Teen Scene, c/o AFRO-AMERICAN, P.O. Box 1857, Baltimore, Md. 21203.

KAREN BANFIELD

Pa. Tribune's first award

PENNSYLVANIA: — In the Grand Ballroom of the Warwick Hotel on Monday, the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union received the first annual community service award presented by the Philadelphia Tribune for "Cooperation, understanding, employment ratios, progress and consideration and inter-racial relationship."

This is the first time that a newspaper anywhere has so honored and saluted a labor union and this event is even more significant and newsworthy since the Philadelphia Tribune is America's oldest colored newspaper.

The presentation of the award, a distinguished plaque, was made by E. Washington Rhodes, publisher of the Tribune. Mr. Rhodes was the first colored person ever appointed an assistant attorney general of the United States.

Accepting the award was William Ross, international vice president of the ILGWU and manager of the Philadelphia Dress Joint Board.

Mr. Ross is presently a member of the Philadelphia Board of Education.

Other speakers included Senator Joseph S. Clark, Mayor James H. J. Tate and Eustace Gay, president of the Philadelphia Tribune Company.

Free concerts sponsored at library

Continuing a tradition established 14 years ago, the Enoch Pratt Free Library and the Women's Association of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra will again co-sponsor four chamber music concerts featuring members of the Baltimore Symphony. The programs are open to the public free of charge.

The first concert will be held in the central library's Wheeler auditorium this Saturday, at 2 p.m.

Raphael Faraco, violinist, will lead a group composed of a string quartet with piano.

The second program will be given at Pratt's Northwood branch at 8 p.m. on November 7; the third at the Dundalk avenue branch February 25, at 8 p.m.; and the fourth and final concert at 8 p.m. April 23, at the central Pratt Library.

TEEN TALK

EDITOR'S NOTE: We wish to make a correction. Our new "teen reporter," Michael Belfield, was not the editor of The Booker T. Bulletin, but editorial page editor. Michael is a 10th grade student at Edmondson High School. He is 15 and attends Timothy Baptist Church. He lives at 1142 Myrtle Ave.

Here we go again! This is the second week I've had the pleasure of writing this column and I hope you'll enjoy it. Let's start with some news of the week.

I'd like to commend all you hip guys and dolls who attended the meeting at City Hall with Mayor D'Alesandro on Sept. 23 and voiced your opinions and suggestions on the problems of the city. I'd also like to congratulate the successful bidding for a new school building.

I'd like to give some recognition to the C.A.A. which does a great job finding jobs for the young people and also provides a great recreational program.

Now for the sports. In the football world the two big games—Edmondson defeated Dunbar 34-14, and Douglass beat Carver 14-6.

As you know the World Series is coming up. Even though our Orioles aren't playing, I think the Series will be very exciting.

Listen! Have you heard about the swinging dance that's going to be at the YMCA next Friday? The featured group is the Bluelights and the cost is $1.00.

There's a new fraternity being started called "Gani." The fraternity is having a dance for the older "teenagers" on Oct. 11 at the Famous Ballroom. Don't miss it.

Over the weekend there were several swinging dances. One was given by the St. Francis school. Another was given at the Lexington Terrace Recreation Center featuring the Sensationals.

MIKE BELFIELD

This week's Top Five are:

1. Say It Loud I'm Black and I'm Proud
2. Break Your Promise
3. Western Union Man
4. Slip Away
5. Little Green Apples

We offer sympathy to the parents of Wanda Leach a fellow "teen ager" who was slain by a sniper this week. Well this is it for this week. Don't forget to let me know what's happening. Instead of sending your letters and postcards to the AFRO building, send them to me:

Michael Belfield
1142 Myrtle Ave.
Baltimore 21201

Don't forget, "Don't be a fool, stay in school, and keep your cool."

LONDON GETS FIRST VICAR FROM AFRICA

LONDON, — This city is to get its first colored Vicar next month. He is the Rev. William Makhuly, 33, of South Africa who takes over St. Philip's Anglican parish church in Battersea.

He was born in Johannesburg and came to England five years ago on a grant from the World Council of Churches. He has been working among colored immigrants in a North London parish.

FDA charges H. L. Hunt Co.

DALLAS, Tex. (NPI) — Following an investigation by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the H. L. Hunt company of Dallas, was charged with distributing contaminated food stuffs in interstate market.

The company is owned by Dallas millionaire H.L. Hunt, local philanthropist, ultra political rightist, strong supporter of George Wallace for President. Hunt, with Wallace, tried to form the United States of the Confederacy — an organization of southerners promoting the secession of 14 Southern states from the Union.

10

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Justice Dept. charges bias by drug firm

WASHINGTON — The Department of Justice has charged Parke, Davis and Co., a major pharmaceutical firm, with employment discrimination in plants at Detroit and Ann Arbor, Mich.

Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark said that the civil complaint, filed in U.S. District Court in Detroit, asserted a violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity section of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The suit alleges that Parke, Davis gives hiring preference to persons referred by or related to current employees, most of whom are white, rather than to walk-in applicants.

* * *

ALSO, THE FIRM makes no effort to recruit and hire colored clerical and professional employees on the same basis as white applicants, the suit said.

Parke, Davis has about 150 colored employes out of a work force of about 3,000 persons in Detroit, and about eight out of 470 persons employed in Ann Arbor, the complaint asserted.

The suit asked that the company be forbidden to continue any of the alleged discriminatory practices and be required to recruit and hire all employes on the same basis.

Parke, Davis has headquarters in Detroit and operates manufacturing and sales facilities throughout the United States.

Thirty-one employment discrimination suits have now been filed by the Department since passage of the 1964 Act, including 21 this year.

Conn. educators plan conference

MIDDLETOWN, Conn. — An all-day conference has been called by the steering committee for a Connecticut Association of Afro-American Educators. Educators throughout Connecticut will meet on Saturday, Sept. 28, at the Fred D. Wish School, 350 Barbour St. in Hartford, Conn. St. in Hartford, Conn.

The establishment of an organization in Connecticut is part of a national effort to organize all those in the black community committed to the educational progress of black people.

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THE DAY will begin at 8 a.m. with registration for the various workshops. Some of the workshop titles are: "Black Students-Compelling Needs," "The Role of the Black Professional," and "Community Control of Schools-Decentralization or Chaos."

The vice-chairman of the International Conference on Black Power will be featured at the evening meeting at 8 p.m.

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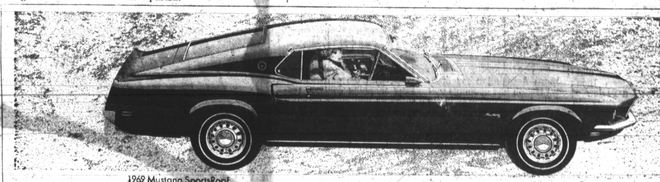

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